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SUBJECT: AVIAN AND PANDEMIC INFLUENZA RESPONSE PLANS

REF: SECSTATE 22992

¶1. The following are activities the Government of El Salvador has undertaken to prepare for the threat posed by highly pathogenic influenza subtype H5N1:

-- The GOES has established the National Commission for Pandemic Avian Influenza Preparations (CONAPREVIAR) to coordinate the activities of government agencies, the private sector, and international agencies in educating the public, monitoring the poultry industry, and preparing for a human pandemic. The Ministry of Health and Ministry of Agriculture head this commission. CONAPREVIAR has established a website, [www.conapreviar.com](http://www.conapreviar.com), which describes the program and answers common questions. CONAPREVIAR officials have met three times already in 2007.

-- In July 2006, the Ministry of Health led a seminar that provided an overview of avian influenza. A second seminar is planned for March 28-30, 2007, to review GOES public affairs efforts should avian flu epizootic or human cases occur in El Salvador.

--The Ministry of Agriculture conducted a week-long emergency response drill in September 2006 to review the country's response to poultry outbreaks. Participants spent two days in a field exercise. The Ministry conducted a second tabletop exercise in December 2006. A third drill is planned for April 2007, including a field exercise for human-to-human transmission in the city of Santa Ana.

-- The Ministry of Agriculture plans to vaccinate more than 99 percent of all commercially raised chickens. Personal protective equipment is being used at all the larger commercial (more than 500 chickens) poultry ranches. Surveillance of backyard chickens remains limited.

-- The GOES has established surveillance sites at many of the border crossings with Guatemala and Honduras and at Comalapa Airport.

¶2. USAID and USDA are actively working with the GOES to assist in preparations for a bird epizootic and a human pandemic. The U.S. Center for Disease Control is providing laboratory equipment and training to test for human H5N1 disease. USSOUTHCOM plans to provide equipment for PCR testing of H5N1.

¶3. The Pan American Health Organization represents the World Health Organization in this region, with the mission to coordinate international efforts. FAO and OIRSA are the two animal groups assisting the GOES with preparations for a future poultry epizootic.

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